

hence, when you will have triumphed over your enemies, and realized all the hopes of your country. I have lived like an honorable man, and have nothing to reproach myself with. I leave behind me a daughter; your Majesty will be a father to her." ⁷⁷ But there is not one word of truth in the bulletin account of Duroc's death. The words which he is said to have uttered in his last moments were invented, like those attributed to Desaix after the battle of Marengo. I suppose Napoleon borrowed from Homer the idea of making his heroes deliver speeches when at the point of death. The fact is, Duroc suffered the most excruciating agony, and under such circumstances a man is not likely to be very eloquent, or, indeed, inclined to speak much. I remember reading at the time a letter which came by an *estafette*; it was written by an individual who accompanied the Emperor, and was addressed to a Minister. The writer desires his friend not to place any reliance on the official account of Napoleon's visit to Duroc. He added that the latter, being at the moment in great suffering, and finding that the Emperor prolonged his visit, turned impatiently on his left side, and said to the Emperor, motioning him with his right hand to withdraw, "Ah, Sire, at least leave me to die quietly."

I will here mention a fact which occurred before Duroc's departure for the campaign of 1812. I used often to visit him at the Pavilion Marsan, in the Tuileries, where he lodged. One forenoon, when I had been waiting for him a few minutes, he came from the Emperor's apartments, where he had been engaged in the usual business. He was in his court-dress. As soon as he entered he pulled off his coat and hat and laid them aside. "I have just had a conversation with the Emperor about you," said he. "Say nothing to anybody. Have patience, and you will be " He had no sooner uttered these words than a footman entered to inform him that the Emperor wished to see him immediately. "Well," said Duroc, "I must go." No sooner was the servant gone than Duroc stamped violently on the floor, and exclaimed,

¹ The Emperor faithfully carried out this wish, making a handsome provision for Mademoiselle Duroc. (See also

the will of Napoleon.)